

**Dedham Public Schools  
School Committee Meeting  
January 4, 2023**

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE PRESENT:

Dr. Melissa Pearrow  
Victor Hebert  
Mayanne Briggs  
Joshua Donati  
Christopher Polito  
Cailen McCormick  
Tracey White  
Tara Duncan (absent)

MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION PRESENT:

Dr. Ian Kelly, Interim Superintendent  
Matthew Wells, Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance  
Dr. Sara Stetson, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services (absent)

Meeting Location:  
Avery Elementary

School Committee Meeting commenced at 7:00 p.m.

Open Meeting

Dr. Melissa Pearrow called the meeting to order.

Pledge of Allegiance

Public Comment  
[NONE.]

Discussion & Vote on Contract for Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Dr. Heather Smith

Dr. Pearrow asked the School Committee to vote on the contract for Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction Assessment.

***Motion was made to approve Dr. Heather Smith for the role of Interim Assistant Superintendent. Motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.***

Dedham Public Schools  
Interim Superintendent's Update  
January 4th, 2023  
Day 74 of the 2022-2023 School Year

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Teaching and Learning

Early Childhood Education Center

Director of Early Childhood Education for Marlborough Public Schools Andy Bernabei visited the ECEC this morning. Marlborough is interested in expanding current programming for their youngest learners and, after learning about programmatic implementation in Dedham through the Massachusetts School Administrators Association (MSAA), arranged a visit to speak with Principal Taylor and members of the ECEC staff. Mr. Bernabei toured the ECEC and had a productive discussion with our PK experts.

The ECEC has been visited a number of times by professionals who have primarily been interested in the facilities side of the operation and I thought it was worth pointing out that what's happening inside the building is catching the attention of other local school districts.





## Oakdale School

Principal Hermesch and Vinny Donoian, YMCA Site Director, co hosted a series of grade level assemblies today focusing on school wide expectations at Oakdale. Ms. Hermesch and Mr. Donoian reviewed the importance of being cordial, hard-working, respectful, and reliable members of the Oakdale community during the school day and during before and after school programs.



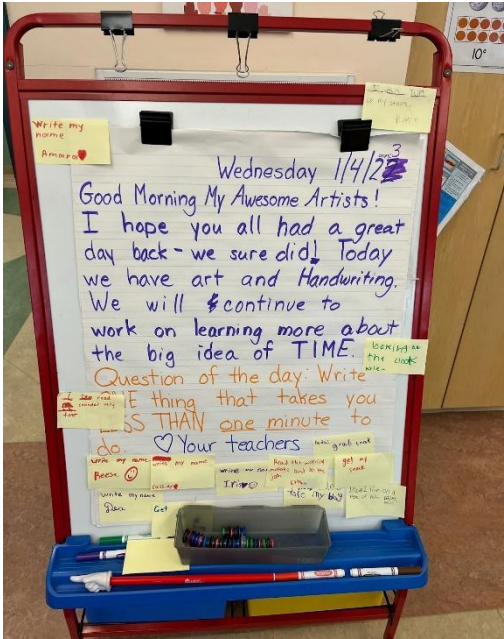
### Avery Elementary School

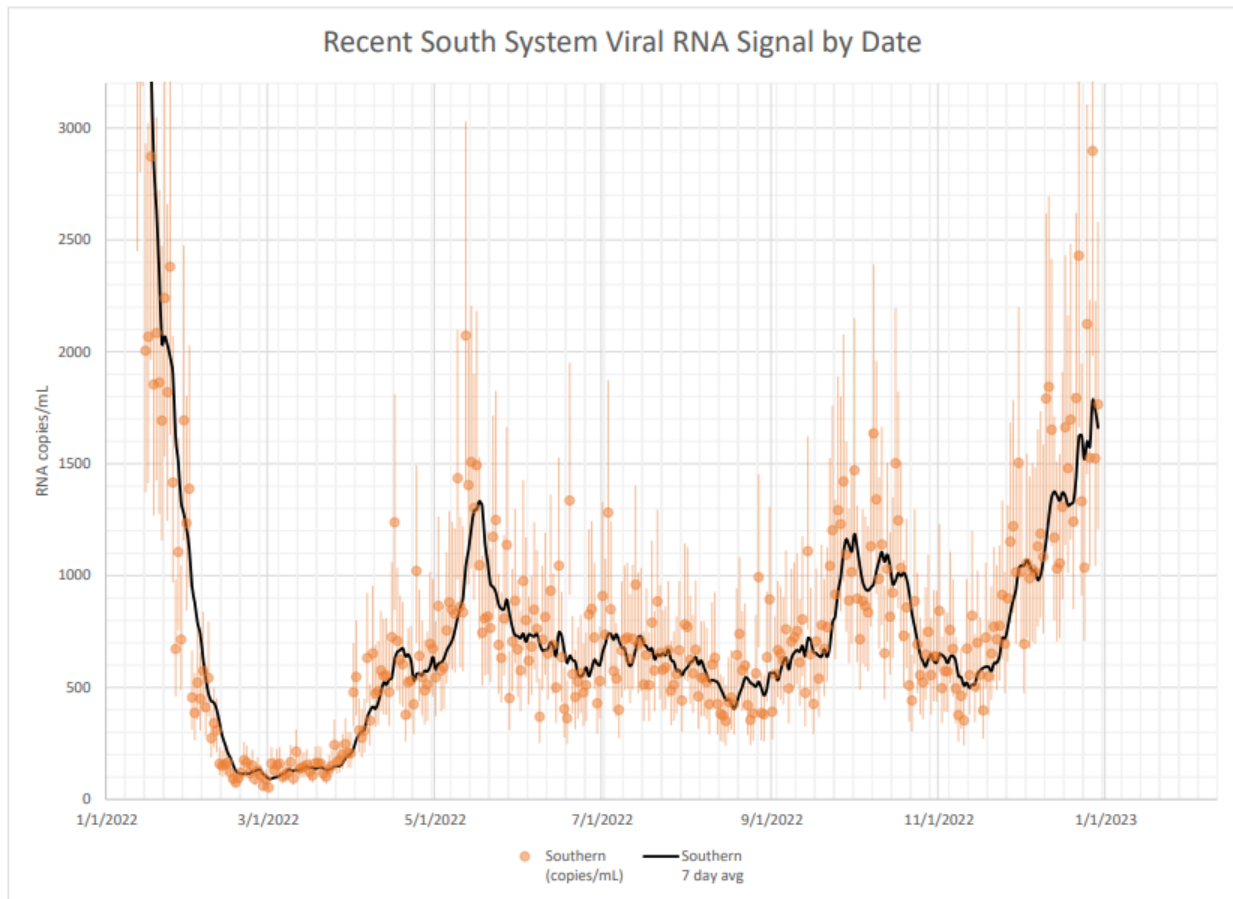
Mr. Paris and I visited classrooms at Avery this morning to take a look at teaching and learning and enjoy time with our amazing students and teachers. 2nd graders in Ms. D'Antonio's class were engaged in snacking during science and Ms. Delehanty's 5th graders were engrossed in discussion of different takes on the story of Little Red Riding Hood.



Ms. Blazejewski's 2nd grade class provided Mr. Paris and I with a great peek into the morning meeting which is a cornerstone of social and emotional learning at the elementary level. Ms. Blazejewski and her colleagues welcome children into the classroom every morning with a handwritten message. Morning messages generally provide students with an overview of what

is happening throughout the school day and what they will be learning about. Additionally, and arguably more importantly, the morning message provides students an opportunity to engage in a shared experience, to learn about one another, and to build community.





**COMMENTS about Superintendent’s Update**

Mr. Donati said he appreciates the real world examples presented in the Interim Superintendent’s Update

Preliminary Discussion of 2023-2024 School Calendar

Mr. Donati suggested they incorporate some of the other religious holidays to reflect the needs of the community.

Dr. Pearrow said there will be a chance to vote in two meetings about the calendar. She plans to have more discussions about the calendar.

Ms. White said December 22<sup>nd</sup> is usually a traffic disaster and we have tried to make that day at least a half day in the past. When Christmas Day is on a Monday it’s shorter so to add a full day off would be appropriate.

Dr. Kelly said the calendar is still open for discussion.

### Superintendent's Search

Dr. Pearrow the five candidates for the Superintendent's position will be visiting starting tomorrow. There are many opportunities to meet the candidates on Zoom and at the library. There will be public interviews held in the evening from 6 to 8:30 pm.

- o January 5th - Dr. Renee McCall
- o January 9th - Ms. Nan Murphy
- o January 10th - Dr. June Saba-Maguire
- o January 11th - Dr. Marlene DiLeo
- o January 12th - Dr. Armand Pires

Mr. Donati asked how feedback would be received from the Central Offices.

Ms. Briggs said that NESDEC set up feedback forms that can be used by all interested groups. She said feedback will be supplied by the Central Office on a regular basis throughout the process.

Dr. Kelly said there are plenty of mechanisms for feedback. Some paper forms will be available as well.

Mr. Polito asked when School Committee members would get the information.

Dr. Pearrow confirmed that all feedback from the interviews will be available before the January 18<sup>th</sup> School Committee deliberation.

Dr. Kelly confirmed that hybrid meetings will be held for the community.

### Reports/Updates/Requests

#### Before/After School and Summer Programming – Director of ESD/ESY Programming Alyssa Freda

Alyssa Freda presented an update on the progress made on Dedham's Extended School Day and Extended School Year program called Learning Enrichment and Play (LEAP).

#### Learning Enrichment and Play (LEAP)

- Registration will be on March 1<sup>st</sup>, six weeks earlier than usual.
- Online registration and payment options will be available through [Dedham.powerschool.com/public/login](http://Dedham.powerschool.com/public/login).

- Early Childhood and Elementary Programming will be merged to provide more inclusive programming.
- Recreational Friday will promote non-traditional learning and will provide a variety of activities, and build partnerships with other Dedham organizations and high school volunteers.
- Reinstating the Middle School English Learners program.
- A short tutorial on registration was displayed.

#### Before and After Extended Day

- Extended day program will be transitioning in-house and phased in through a three year transition period. In-house programs will enhance access and equity.
- The program includes help for families with conflict resolution.
- Breakfast and snacks will be provided.
- Collaboration will produce an After School program that will integrate with the regular curriculum.

#### Transition to Extended Day Program

- Phased-in Timeline for transition from YMCA to LEAP:
  - Avery and Greenlodge will be the first schools to transition to LEAP Extended Day.
  - Riverdale and Oakdale programs will start up in 2024-25.
  - Oakdale will begin in 2025-26.

#### Family Communication Plan.

- Interviews will be held with the current YMCA employees.
- A number of drop-in events will be scheduled for families.
- Registration for Avery and Greenlodge will open on April 3.
- Online account registration allows tracking of payments.
- Enough staff need to be hired to accommodate all the YMCA current enrollees.
- A registration walkthrough will be held at ECEC, Greenlodge and Avery.
- Tuition and calendar will stay the same as last year for the upcoming year.

#### COMMENTS about LEAP

Ms. White said this is a program kids deserve. She thinks we may have to explain that we are not taking something away from previous YMCA participants. She thinks there has to be an explanation that this does not entail more school work. Ms. Freda said she has worked through a typical day that she could share with others.



Ms. McCormack said there is so much to navigate, the website is improved. She suggested putting a one pay summary of what has changed and what has stayed the same would be helpful.

Ms. Freda confirmed that summer program offerings will be announced by mid- February.

Ms. McCormack said families who need childcare need to know ahead of time. She hopes that in the program's subsequent years that information will be disseminated earlier. Ms. McCormack feels that pushing it back to a January registration would be optimal.

Mr. Donati said this is a great improvement. He asked if the transition to an in-house program will produce savings. Mr. Wells said that they are hoping this will produce savings and the opportunity to bring in other programs.

Ms. Briggs confirmed that during the phase-in, that the other schools will still have the YMCA programs available. She stressed the importance for program access to be inclusive.

Mr. Hebert commended Ms. Freda for her hard work in getting the extended day program up and running in such a short time period.

### Subcommittee Updates

- Budget

Mr. Polito said they will have a budget hearing at the next meeting. Budget hearing needs to be undertaken in time for Town Meeting vote.

Ms. White commented that the School Committee will be receiving the information for the Superintendent Search and the budget on December 18<sup>th</sup>. She thinks that would be a lot to process. She asked if we are getting a google sheet summary from NESDEC as well.

Ms. Briggs said that the School Committee does not have to vote on the budget at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, but it has to be presented by that time.

Ms. Wells said there will be a quick presentation of the budget and then feedback can be received at a later date. Budget needs to be posted 48 hours before the public hearing.

- Communications

No updates. Ms. McCormack said they will be putting together a quarterly report after Superintendent Search.

- Curriculum Advisory

Ms. McCormack said Dr. Smith has stepped in to facilitate the Curriculum Advisory meetings. They are starting to work out a plan to have a community forum with a survey disseminated before the public hearing.

- Policy

No updates.

- SBRC

Ms. Briggs announced there is a meeting on Tuesday on January 17<sup>th</sup> at Town Hall and January 31<sup>st</sup> at Oakdale. They received a new chart about potential sites from Jonathan Levi.

Dr. Pearrow said that the School Committee will have to meet about creating an educational model. There may be another meeting on January 28<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Kelly said that Mr. Wells and he will be meeting on January 10<sup>th</sup> with SBRC to ensure that they are all aware of expectations and timelines.

- Traffic Circulation

Ms. White said that the Traffic Circulation Subcommittee will meet after end of January.

- Negotiations

Ms. White said they had a Negotiations meeting yesterday and they will be meeting again in two weeks.

- Parks & Recreation

Mr. Polito said they hope to have a meeting with Parks and Rec after the next School Meeting.

#### Donations

[NONE.]

#### Review and Approval Vote of Previous Meeting Minutes -- December 7, 2022

***Motion was made to approve the meeting minutes from December 7, 2022. Motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.***

### Old/New Business

Mr. Polito said that now that we are half through the year, he would like to get an update on educational perspectives and how students are tracking based on expectations.

Mr. Polito asked about an update from Oneida Fox-Roy about mental health study to find out what we can do to make every child feel welcome in the Dedham Schools. He also wants to make sure that the EEDs are working on the athletic fields. Ms. White confirmed that they are annually checked.

### Acknowledgements and Announcements

Dr. Pearrow said that the agenda for February will include discipline with a lens towards connectivity. Dr. Kelly said that professionals will be talking to the School Committee about that subject.

Ms. White said she would like Tara to speak about the college admissions for DHS students.

Ms. White announced that the Dedham High School Boys and Girls hockey team will hold back to back games at Nobles on Saturday in honor of Christine Stec.

Tryouts for Cinderella took place yesterday.

***Motion was made to adjourn the School Committee Meeting with a roll call vote. Motion was approved by a vote of 7-0.***

***Motion was made to enter Executive Session under Exemption 2, and not return to public session, to discuss grievances filed by the Dedham Education Association.***

*Submitted by*

*Virginia Quinn*

*Recording Secretary*

